



Press Release

The FFPI welcomes the European Commission's action against Germany for breaking EU competition rules

Brussels, 22 October 2004 – The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) welcomed the European Commission's decision to open an infringement procedure against Germany for contravening EU competition rules in the area of mail preparation services.

Restrictions of the market and network access in Germany have been a significant concern to the FFPI. The German law, as it stands, leads to a situation that impedes to private mail sorting companies to compete with Deutsche Post. The FFPI considers that distortions such as the one that the Commission yesterday acted against are severely affecting firms competing with the universal service provider as well as users. *"The FFPI supports the Commission's efforts in ensuring that rules governing competition are truly and fully respected and in promoting the attainment of an open and dynamic Internal Market for postal services"* commented FFPI President, Philippe Bodson.

The FFPI believes that correct application of EU norms will result in a better functioning postal sector in Germany and that a positive outcome of the procedure launched by the Commission will open new opportunities for both mail service providers and users. The positive example developing in the UK postal market shows that where operators, such as Deutsche Post, can offer postal services thanks to the access to the incumbent's delivery network, barriers to competition are reduced. This initiative taken by the UK Regulator should be followed in other markets like the German one in order to achieve better quality of service and more affordable rates for users. *"Stamp prices in Germany are amongst the highest in the EU. Further opening of the market is essential to ensure that tariffs remain affordable and justified, as foreseen in the Postal Directive. I encourage the Commission to continue its effective action to police market behaviours, particularly as regards excessive pricing issues"*, concluded Mr Bodson.

The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) is a unique European initiative that brings together users and competitors of the public postal operators who strongly believe in the benefit of a liberalised and more competitive postal market. Through its membership, the FFPI currently represents more than 7,1 million companies. The FFPI's key objectives are to secure a final date for full liberalisation of postal services at the latest in 2009 and a fair playing field in the postal sector to prevent public postal monopolies to turn into private ones.

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